

## Syntax Surgery

Language Objective: Students will organize their given words in a syntactical sequence to form a complete sentence that will make sense. As students are formulating their sentences, they will check to make sure the sentence is grammatically correct.

Method – Syntax Surgery

# Agenda

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- Language Star
- Method Overview
- Syntax Surgery Steps and Demonstration
- Differentiation
- Pitfalls
- Teacher Tips
- Additional Considerations / Resources
- Questions

# Language Star



# Method Overview

## Language Star – Syntax

**Goal** – To slow down the syntax of English so students can visually see how words are ordered and learn **why**. Syntax plays a critical role in not only language, but in reading comprehension and writing proficiency.

**Language Objective** – Students will organize their sentence using all the given words, in syntactical sequence, to form a complete sentence in the declarative, negative, and interrogative forms.

**Grammar Focus** – DSI skill you are working on, this changes (POS, verb tense)

**Steps** – Day 1, Day 2, Day 1, Day 2, Grammar Wall (Day 5)

# Method – Syntax Surgery

## □ Day 1 “Hands On”

### ▣ Steps

1. Students manipulate the words to construct the sentence. Students have to use all of the words.
2. Have a conversation about the parts of speech in the sentence.
  - Remove nouns, then replace
  - Remove verbs, then replace
  - Discuss **why** certain parts of speech are located where they are
  - Discuss the grammar focus (DSI)
  - Remove words that are not critical to the meaning of the sentence
3. Have students construct the sentence in the negative and interrogative forms.
  - Discuss where words change in the sentence and **why**.
4. If time allows, have student construct new sentences by rearranging the words.
  - Rearrange the subject of the sentence
  - Substitute grammar focus words

# Method – Syntax Surgery

## □ Day 2 “Eyes On” (you want the sentence manipulation to occur in students’ minds)

### □ Steps

1. Write or place the words to the sentence out of order and have students write the sentence in its original form (comp book)
2. Have students write the original sentence in the negative and interrogative forms
3. Revisit the grammar focus from Day 1 -discuss, underline
4. Extension activities, if time allows:
  - Students change the verb tense of the sentence
  - Students add descriptive words to the sentence
  - Students change the subject of the sentence
  - Syntax Surgery worksheet

# Method – Syntax Surgery

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## □ Day 5 Grammar Wall

Place all words from previous two sentences on the grammar wall according to parts of speech.

# Differentiation



- Adaptable for all levels
  - ▣ Complexity of sentences
  - ▣ Partnering
  - ▣ Differentiating teacher support
  - ▣ Pacing



# Pitfalls

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- Make sure you know all parts of speech ahead of time
- Don't skip explanations of parts of speech locations
  - Don't forget to ask the “Why?”
  - Make sure to have the objective and grammar focus posted

# Tips

- Have the sentence precut in baggies (reusable)
- Have blank pieces of paper ready for negative, interrogative and substitutions (and lost words)
- Have the desired sentence on card for you to look at, POS on back of cards
- Works great in a pocket chart - could also use overhead or whiteboard, words w/tape on whiteboard
- 50/50 and **Why?** If one is having trouble others are too, error correct and explain whole group and then repeat whole group
- Worksheet and/or sentence in baggy can be used as a center
- You can use a content sentence, taken from a prior reading
- Can be used in conjunction with vertical sentence
- Dress – up
- **Assessment** – worksheet, hands on, eyes on, POS sorter, Why? questions for rules

# Additional Considerations

- Think about when would you utilize this method during the time blocks of the day?
- Routine – focus on content
- Organizing room – referencing / accessibility (syntax rules posted to refer to)
- Intermediates – compound subjects, starting sentences with different POS, conditional sentences

# Syntax Surgery

## DESCRIPTION

Students re-assemble sentences that have been cut up.

## PURPOSE

By re-assembling cut-up sentences, students can slow down the syntax of English and visually see how words are ordered.

## KEY LANGUAGE SKILLS

Syntax

## MATERIALS

Cut up sentences, either on index cards or other small paper bits.

## PROCEDURES

1. Teacher selects sentences, either from texts, student writing, story books, or other sources.
2. Each word from the sentence is written on an index card, or other small piece of paper.
3. Students work in pairs or individually to put these cut-up sentences back together in the proper order.

As a child, Greenberg rushed home every day after school, grabbed his bat, glove, and ball, and dashed to the ballpark. To work on his hitting, he asked friends to pitch with him. To improve his fielding, he asked friends to hit the ball to him, while he counted how many he could catch in a row.



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### **HOT TIPS**

This can be an excellent way to integrate some content area material with language teaching. Select key sentences from students' prior reading. Ask students to generate games and other ideas, in addition to the extensions listed below. Also, see the attached student worksheet that can accompany this strategy.

### **EXTENSIONS**

#### ***FOR BEGINNING AND EARLY INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS...***

1. Students identify and remove all nouns.
2. Students identify and remove all verbs.
3. Students remove all words not critical to central meaning.
4. Students change subject of sentence to he/she, her/his.
5. Students generate words that rhyme for words in the sentence.

#### ***FOR INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS....***

1. Students turn the sentence into a question.
2. Students negate the sentence.
3. Students change the position of the subject in the sentence.
4. Students, with a partner, deal the cards and form the sentences one card at a time.
5. Students generate synonyms for key words in the sentence.
6. Students classify all words of the sentence according to the parts of speech.
7. Students add descriptive words to a sentence.
8. *Use key sentences from content area chapters to help students review.*
9. Students generate antonyms for key words in the sentence.
10. Students change the verb tense of the sentence.

#### ***FOR EARLY ADVANCED AND ADVANCED STUDENTS...***

1. One student holds all the cards to the sentence. One at a time, a student "deals" the words to the other student. Those students must put the words in correct syntactic order until the sentence is completed.
2. In a group of four, divide up all the words from four sentences. Students take turns putting down either the first word of a sentence, or the word that follows.
3. Once students are completed, students removed one word at a time and identify its part of speech.

### Syntax Surgery

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Original Sentence</b>  |  |
| <b>Remove Nouns</b>       |  |
| <b>Remove Verbs</b>       |  |
| <b>Key Phrase</b>         |  |
| <b>Make It A Question</b> |  |
| <b>Make It Negative</b>   |  |

# QUESTIONS????



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